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Remarks/Arguments

Applicants previously elected claims 19-23, 25 and 31 for examination. Claims 19, 25, 31, 37 and 41 have now been amended. The Examiner has asserted two types of rejections for which Applicants now respond.

1. Rejections under 35 USC §112

Claim 19 is rejected as being indefinite because the phrase "the user may be" makes it unclear whether the limitations following this phrase are part of the claimed invention. Claims 19, 25, and 31 have now been amended to remove the indefiniteness problem of the phrase "the user may be".

In addition, the Examiner asserts that claim 19's use of the phrase "economic transaction proposal" renders the claim vague and indefinite. The Examiner suggested the use of the term "purchase order transaction" instead. Claims 19, 25, 31, 37 and 41 have been amended to use the Examiner's preferred terminology. Applicants now request that the rejections be withdrawn.

2. Rejections under 35 USC §103

The Examiner has rejected these claims under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Thomas et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,301,574) in view of Cudahy et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,567,822). In the Office Action, the Examiner admits that Thomas et al. "fail to disclose affording network-based management services to the user based on the request for proposal and the identified data structure, wherein affording project management services includes managing assets in a networked-based supply chain, including optimizing use of service provider assets and manufacturer assets and providing maintenance and service

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provider and manufacturer assets." The Examiner asserts that these deficiencies in Thomas are taught by Cudahy et al.

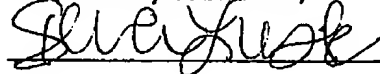
The present application has been assigned to Andersen Consulting, LLP. This assignment was recorded on July 11, 2000. The following year, Andersen Consulting changed its name to Accenture LLP. This name change is presently being recorded and a copy of the Recordation Cover Sheet is enclosed with this document.

The cited Cudahy et al. reference (U.S. Patent No. 6,567,822) is also assigned to Accenture LLP. Thus, the present application and the cited Cudahy reference were (at the time the invention of the present application was made) both owned by Accenture LLP. Therefore, the Cudahy reference is not available as prior art. As the Thomas et al. reference on its own does not teach all the limitations of Applicants' invention as claimed, the rejection of the claims under §103 is improper. Accordingly, Applicants request that the rejections be withdrawn.

3. Conclusion

In the event a telephone conversation would expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner may reach the undersigned at 612-607-7508. If any fees are due in connection with the filing of this paper, then the Commissioner is authorized to charge such fees including fees for any extension of time, to Deposit Account No. 50-1901 (Docket 060021-358201).

Respectfully submitted,



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